

**Secret**



OFFICE OF  
NATIONAL ESTIMATES

## MEMORANDUM

*Cyprus: A New Crisis in the Making?*

**Secret** 06

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

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MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Cyprus: A New Crisis in the Making?<sup>\*</sup>

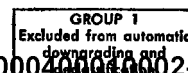
NOTE

The continuing Cyprus issue seems to be heating up again. This paper is intended to put recent events in perspective and to provide background for any developments that might come out of the discussions scheduled to begin in New York early in October between the Turkish Foreign Minister and the Greek Undersecretary for Foreign Affairs.

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\* *This memorandum was prepared by the Office of National Estimates and coordinated within CIA.*

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1. The relative quiet which has prevailed on Cyprus since the last major violence in 1967 could easily break down as a result of deadlock in the talks between the Greek and Turkish communities, hardening attitudes in Ankara, and the return of former resistance chief, George Grivas. The issues underlying the Cyprus dispute are fundamental. The Greek four-fifths of the island's population insists that it should have unfettered control of the government. The Turkish minority wants to retain its separate status and looks to the motherland for support in this aim. Animosity and hatred between the two groups have resulted in several outbreaks of communal violence in recent decades, nearly involving Greece and Turkey in war and seriously engaging the interests and energies of the US.

2. Representatives of the Greek and Turkish communities on the island have talked directly to one another for more than three years in an effort to explore the possibilities of solving the knotty constitutional impasse left by the breakdown of the London-Zurich Accords\* in 1963. The lengthy talks have not produced any

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\* *The London-Zurich Accords were concluded in 1959 between Greece, Turkey, the UK, and the Cypriots to provide for the establishment of an independent Cyprus state. The Accords reserved specified political rights to the Turkish community.*

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solutions; indeed they only slightly narrowed the gap between the sides. The negotiators -- Rauf Denktash for the Turkish community and Glafkos Clerides for the Greek -- had to refer all substantive policy matters to Ankara and to Cypriot President Makarios respectively. The Turks insisted on the right to a separate administration accorded them by the Cypriot Constitution and the London-Zurich Accords. Makarios, for his part, adamantly rejected any arrangement that would derogate from the concept of a unitary state run by the Greek majority. This unbending attitude on both sides caused the talks to lose momentum, and, for some months now, they have been hopelessly deadlocked. Even such subsidiary points of agreement as have been reached by the mediators would become operative only upon the conclusion of an accord on the underlying issue of the administrative rights of the Turkish community.

3. The main positive value of the talks between Denktash and Clerides has been the provision of a forum for airing a number of questions that might otherwise have violently embroiled the communities one with another. When communal incidents threatened to generate broader conflict, the negotiators managed to calm tempers and avoid violence.

4. With the passage of time, however, this precarious balance is being threatened. Since the talks are no longer giving even the appearance of progress, both communal leaderships feel no longer able to justify their continuation. The positions of the parties have been clarified and sharpened during the talks, but the proposals and counterproposals now on the table emphasize the inherent contradictions between Greek majority rule and Turkish separatism even more forcefully than before. In this situation, the prospect of a break in the talks and the danger of renewed violence on the island loom increasingly large.

*Current Attitudes of Turkey and Greece*

5. The advent of the Erim government has meant a more urgent Turkish concern with the Cyprus dispute. Long connected with Turkey's Cyprus policy,\* Prime Minister Erim evidently feels a special obligation to work for an early solution to this difficult issue satisfactory to Turkey. His experience

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\* Erim had been an advisor to the Menderes government on Cyprus affairs and participated in the negotiations that led to the London-Zurich Accords of 1959. In 1964, he was designated Turkish representative to take part in Acheson's mediation effort in Geneva.

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inclines him to believe that Ankara must insist on the political rights provided in the London-Zurich Accords. Moreover, he feels pressure in this regard from the Turkish military establishment, which now plays a larger role than before in formulating Turkish policy. Senior military leaders and many civilian officials as well are interested in reducing Ankara's burdensome support (about \$20 million a year) for the Turkish Cypriot community.\*

6. Although pessimistic over the prospects of worthwhile results from the intercommunal talks, Erim in April 1971 announced his willingness to give the negotiations "one last chance". In June he pressed Athens to use its influence to induce Makarios to offer meaningful concessions. Erim evidently hoped that if the Papadopoulos regime found it impossible to deliver the obdurate Makarios, it might be persuaded to join Ankara in imposing a solution on the Cypriots. To explore this further, a meeting between the Turkish Foreign Minister and Greek Undersecretary for Foreign Affairs Palamas has been scheduled for New York for early October. At the same time, Turkey made certain military moves which, although primarily in connection with fall maneuvers,

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\* *In contrast, the Athens government does not provide any direct financial subsidy to the Greek Cypriot community.*

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serve to increase Turkish capability for a rapid military response to any adverse development on Cyprus.

7. Under the stimulus of hardening Turkish attitudes, Athens has taken a more forceful part in the search for a solution. The Greek government seems in effect to have put a higher priority on improving relations with Turkey than on satisfying Hellenic aspirations on Cyprus. There has been considerable coolness between Nicosia and Athens especially since the attempt to assassinate the Cypriot President in March 1970; Makarios believes that Athens condoned the effort if it did not authorize it. Nonetheless, in June 1971 Prime Minister Papadopoulos urgently pressed Makarios to offer concessions on administrative arrangements to the Turkish Cypriots. When Makarios refused to be swayed by this appeal, Papadopoulos met with him personally in Athens at the start of September. Reports of the outcome differ in some particulars, but clearly Makarios did not yield on the essence of his position. Athens is thus left with the delicate problem of determining how far to go in exerting public pressures on Makarios.

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*Grivas*

8. The disappearance of General Grivas, former Cypriot resistance leader, from his exile in Athens at the end of August also has contributed to the uncertainty in Cyprus. Grivas' whereabouts have not been made public, though there is little doubt that he has returned to the island. It is hard to assess on present evidence his motives in returning to Cyprus; some have alleged that the Athens junta or a dissident faction thereof connived to send him to the island to displace Makarios; others have suggested that Grivas and the Cypriot President are in cooperation, if not in connivance, to discomfit the Turks. In any event, Grivas has long been a rival of Makarios for the leadership of the Cypriot cause, and a particular exponent of *enosis* -- i.e., union with Greece. Grivas' lack of political acumen has given the wily Makarios the advantage in the past, but the problem of keeping Grivas under control will be troublesome.

9. Makarios has added to the tension in recent months by publicly calling for *enosis*. This may represent no more than politically-motivated lip service to the subject, for Makarios, on his record, clearly prefers to be the leader of an independent

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Cyprus rather than head of a subordinate part of Greece. Makarios sees any concessions toward Turkish administrative autonomy as leading to eventual partition. Yet his calls for enosis, whatever their purpose, tend to be inflammatory; enosis is a bugbear for the Turkish Cypriot community and a concept that evokes determined opposition in Turkey. Though Makarios has sought to reassure the US and others that his recent statements have only routine significance, his words have further muddled the waters, giving rise to mounting doubts that the present calm on the island can persist.

*Prospects*

10. At this stage, the Greeks are actively seeking new ways to keep intercommunal discussions alive. In this context, both Athens and Makarios would like to see the appointment of a UN mediator. In the past, UN mediators have been sympathetic to the Greek community's desire for a unitary state under its control. Ankara, for this reason, does not view the prospect with enthusiasm. But Turkey might acquiesce if the mediator's mandate were severely limited, for the Turkish leaders recognize the value of continued contact between the communities. In any

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case, it is likely that some form of direct communications between the two communities in Cyprus will be maintained in the immediate future.

11. UN peace-keeping forces are stationed on the island under a Security Council mandate which must be renewed every six months. Their presence helps to keep down tensions between the communities and to prevent incidents from escalating. The force is small, however, and communal fighting could easily get beyond the ability of the UN troops to contain it. Moreover, there is a small chance that insufficient finances or the unwillingness of participating countries to continue to furnish troops could cause the force to be withdrawn. Such a withdrawal would increase the likelihood of violence on the island.

12. Even with the UN forces there, the chances of new communal violence on Cyprus are likely to rise. Thus far Grivas has done nothing to stir up violence, and the Turkish reaction has been mild. But his very presence on the island could encourage renewed outbreaks against the Turkish community. In any event, his continued stay might agitate both the Turkish community and the Ankara government. If fighting erupts on the island with the suggestion that the objective is enosis, it would

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not matter much whether Grivas is actually involved, the Turkish government would have to consider responding with force. No regime in Ankara could afford to stand by without firm action while the Turkish community on the island was getting the worst of it in conflict with the Greeks.

13. The Soviets would probably prefer that any such new crisis over Cyprus be avoided. They are opposed to enosis. They have profited from a stalemated position between war and peace on the island. Years ago the Soviets strongly supported Makarios and a unitary state on Cyprus. Now they are giving greater emphasis to improving relations with Ankara, though without abandoning Makarios. The latter for his part, has sought to manipulate the Soviets to serve as a counterweight to the Turks; he is not interested, however, in slipping into dependency on the Kremlin. That the Soviets too have a conflict of interest was apparent during Makarios' recent trip in Moscow, where the Kremlin first made verbal concessions to the Greek Cypriot position, then called these concessions into question by statements of Soviet diplomats in Ankara. Yet, for all its diplomatic maneuvering, Moscow does not hold the key to developments on Cyprus, and the USSR is not likely to play a decisive role in what transpires on the island.

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14. Nor is the US in a favorable position to shape the course of Cypriot developments. The Vance mediation mission in 1967 achieved its aim of dampening down tensions, but only because Athens backed down, removing its extra troops and recalling Grivas from Cyprus. Washington could, of course, again press Turkey and Greece to cooperate in cooling tensions, though this course would risk some damage to US relations with one or the other of these allies. Moreover, if the Turks had become sufficiently aroused to begin active preparations to attack, it would then be questionable whether the US could dissuade them. Ankara has twice called off a threatened invasion; the Turkish government might feel that a third instance would make Turkey appear subservient to the US and destroy the future credibility of its military force.

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